

In other news

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Laboratory dramatically reduces its water use

Los Alamos National Laboratory decreased its water usage by 26 percent in 2014, with about one-third of the reduction attributable to using reclaimed water to cool a supercomputing center.

“Our goal during 2014 was to use only re-purposed water to support our mission at the Strategic Computing Complex (SCC), and we achieved that goal,” said Cheryl Cabbil, Associate Director for Nuclear and High Hazard Operations, which administers the Sanitary Effluent Reclamation Facility (SERF).

The reclamation facility contributed more than 27 million gallons of re-purposed water to the SCC, a secured supercomputing facility that supports the Laboratory’s national security mission and is one of the institution’s larger water users.

“Using reclaimed water from SERF substantially decreased our water usage, supporting our overall mission,” Cabbil said.

In addition to the strategic water reuse program at SERF, the Laboratory reduced water use in 2014 by focusing conservation efforts on areas that use the most water, repairing leaks identified in routine surveys and upgrading to water-conserving fixtures.

“Part of our role as good stewards of the environment is to conserve finite resources such as water whenever possible,” said Michael Brandt, Associate Director for Environment, Safety and Health at the Laboratory. “Conserving water while achieving our mission is a great example of how we are pursuing long-term environmental sustainability.”

The [Saving Water at Los Alamos National Laboratory](#) YouTube video explains how SERF collects industrial wastewater and treats it for reuse.

Legislative measures recognize private STEM support

New Mexico [House Memorial 21](#) and a companion measure, New Mexico [Senate Memorial 30](#), recently recognized the importance of private sector involvement and commitment in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) education and preparing a highly skilled workforce for the future. Air Force Research Laboratory, Intel, Los Alamos National Laboratory, Northrop Grumman, PNM Resources and Sandia National Laboratories signed a *STEM Education in New Mexico* proclamation last year that commits the partners to leading the way in supporting STEM education efforts in a variety of ways.

House Memorial 21 was introduced by State Representative Stephanie Garcia-Richard (D-Los Alamos, Rio Arriba, Sandoval, Santa Fe), Senate Memorial 30 by State Senator Mimi Stewart (D-Bernalillo).

To learn more about the private sector proclamation, check the [Major New Mexico employers sign STEM education proclamation](#) story in *Community Connections*’ November 2014 issue.

New grant will help expand Venture Acceleration Fund

The [Regional Development Corporation](#) (RDC) in Española has been selected to receive a \$248,946 Economic Development Administration Cluster Grant from the U.S. Commerce Department’s Regional Innovation Strategies Program. The award will help expand the [Venture Acceleration Fund](#) (VAF), which was established by Los Alamos National Security (LANS), LLC in 2006. The LANS Grant Writing Program provided critical assistance to the RDC in writing the grant.

“As America’s ‘Innovation Agency,’ the Commerce Department has a key role to play in supporting the innovators and job creators of tomorrow,” U.S. Secretary of Commerce Penny Pritzker said. “We want to ensure that all entrepreneurs have access to the tools they need to move their ideas and inventions from idea to market. The Regional Innovation Strategies Program competition is designed to advance this mission across the United States, strengthening our economy and our global competitiveness.”

The RDC will receive the funding over two years, and part of the expanded VAF effort will include the creation of an equity investment fund in collaboration with New Mexico Angels, the state’s accredited angel investor group. The overall goal is to build the VAF into a sustainable fund that can support more growth-oriented companies in northern New Mexico.

"Through continued collaboration between RDC and northern New Mexico's small business community, we will diversify our economy and create quality jobs," said U.S. Senator Martin Heinrich (D-New Mexico).

For more information on the LANS Grant Writing Program, see the [Grant writing assistance available to small businesses, nonprofits and K-20 STEM education programs](#) story in *Community Connections*' May 2014 issue.

Volunteers helped make Discover E event a success

Nearly a hundred volunteers, half from Los Alamos National Laboratory, helped make the recent Discover E event in Los Alamos an interesting, fun evening of hands-on, interactive science, technology, engineering and math activities for K-12 students. New demonstrations this year included three-dimensional printing and x-rays, blood-typing and various magnetic effects to dazzle and entertain the more than 250 participants.

The national [Discover E](#) initiative (formerly the National Engineers Week) was founded by the National Society of Professional Engineers in 1951 to bring the work and contributions of the country's engineers to public attention. The event usually is celebrated near George Washington's birthday since the nation's first president was a military engineer and land surveyor. Next year's Discover E event in Los Alamos is tentatively scheduled for February 25, 2016.

More good news for Embudo Valley Library

Last fall, the Embudo Valley Library and the Dixon Cooperative Market received a \$49,000 U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural Business Enterprise Grant with the help of the Grant Writing Assistance Program that is managed through the Laboratory's Community Programs Office and financed by Los Alamos National Security, LLC (see the [Community food projects win \\$149,000 in grants](#) article in *Community Connections*' November 2014 issue). This year, the library not only is among the recipients of Los Alamos' Employee Giving Campaign but is a finalist for the 2015 National Medal for Museum and Library Service.

The National Medal for Museum and Library Service is the nation's highest honor awarded to museums and libraries by the Institute of Museum and Library Services in recognition of exceptional service and for making a difference in the lives of individuals, families and communities. The finalist selection recognizes Embudo Valley Library's library and literacy programs for the villages of Dixon and Embudo and their broader service region. The National Medal winners will be named later this spring.

In case you missed it: Santa Fe Radio Café replay

A replay of the March 8 interview with Laboratory scientists Sara Del Valle and Nick Generous on Santa Fe Radio Café (KSFR 101.1) is available online on the [Science Radio Café](#) website. Del Valle and Generous discuss how scientists can monitor and forecast diseases around the globe more effectively by analyzing the number of visits to Wikipedia articles. The discussion was the first in a 12-part series of Science Radio Café interviews on the first Tuesday of each month.